

CLUB NEWS



CLUB MEETINGS: The January 2022 Club meetings are scheduled for Wednesday January 5 commencing at 1830 and Wednesday January 19 commencing at 1800 since on this day the business meeting will be followed by a talk. Meetings to be held at THE IMPERIAL, Sliema.

A MEMBER'S NOTE: Past President Lion Victor Borg Barthet has forwarded the following note which is interesting and an eye opener for members: "When our Club consisted of only males, we relied and had a lot of help from our spouses, who were not members of the Club. They organised functions and fund raising events such as Pesto Night, Fashion Shows, Coffee mornings and much more.

Today, thank God, we are a mixed Club, but we still need and should encourage our spouses (male and/or female) to help us in our Fund Raising and other functions".

Lion Victor's note is food for thought. Members should encourage their spouses to participate in club activities.

LOOKING AHEAD: Now that 2021 is ending Club members should start looking ahead to 2022 in the hope that we will continue TO SERVE. We cannot sit on our laurels and think we have achieved our goal. There are many things that we should start thinking about. Though our Club's 50th anniversary is in two years, we should start thinking about that milestone event now. We have to choose the Lion to lead us to celebrate our golden anniversary in a manner befitting our Club which has been active with success over the years.

The LIONS Motto is "WE SERVE". Are You Serving? If not make this your motto and involve yourself in our Club's activities. You'll get more satisfactions in life. Be better LIONSThere is always need for us TO SERVE.



LIONS CLUB SLIEMA NEWSLETTER

December 2021

CLUB'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Lion President Norman Wilson reports

Just as Santa pulled on his shiny black boots so did 44 others bound for the Lions Club Sliema Christmas Party. Just as Santa peeled his carrots to feed hungry reindeer, so did Lion Karl, our very own brilliant chef who resembles that Egyptian Michelin starred chef Gordon Ramases II, peel carrots to feed hungry Lions.

A few imaginary polar white snowflakes fell onto my eyelashes as Victoria flicked them annoyingly off her hair. Two by two we dragged our quivering bodies and stiff limbs towards the Imperial past dwellings where even Boris could be partying – sorry working! Flint-grey skies faded light into pitch darkness.

Rounding a corner and passing two “merry” carol singers, our senses were scintillated to see a welcoming open door, chandeliers glittering inside. For a second I could clearly see a doorman in his red livery and top hat. Was this the Dorchester, Grosvenor House Hotel or Harrods?

Wafting our reddening faces, the warm air welcomed our chilled bodies as we stepped inside. With temperatures taken, book signed, and carpeted stairs climbed, we were ready for it - the Christmas Party. Following the signs, we gaily stepped into a large tastefully furnished room to hear bubbling gravy and soft voices whispering anticipated laughter. Coat off and.... woops! My President's gold badge I had worn a minute ago had disappeared. After an anxious befuddled search, heart a-beating, I said a quiet prayer to San-Antnin. Then I found the back grip down at reception and the front pin in Karl's kitchen. You see, it does work!

A Roland keyboard was erected on its shiny stretcher, the ivories touched by nimble and practiced fingers - ah, the delight of music! Notes of different pitch projected sound waves of sweet simultaneous Christmas melodies to soothe every last wrinkle seducing us all into a Christmas Wonder Land where anxiety and worry are non-existent.

NOVEL FUND RAISING IDEA

Lion Susan Galea Borg came up with a novel idea to raise funds for the Club. On the first meeting in December Lion Susan displayed the array of pastries, seen in the photo below, which she had baked herself to be sold to members at the meeting.



The snacks were cheese pastries, chocolate covered cake pops, ginger biscuits and shortbread neatly handed out in small plastic bags.

In a few minutes all the goodies which Susan baked were taken up by those present for the meeting.

After the success of this innovative fund raiser Lion Susan prepared more snacks for the second meeting in December. Considering the success of this initiative, Lion Susan intends to repeat this unique fund-raiser.

While congratulating Lion Susan for her idea, this should encourage other members to come up with ideas to raise much needed funds.

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LIONS IS OUR NAME

*All bonded in One Team
We're not looking for fame
We serve is our theme.
All together hand in hand
We're a chain over the world
In the snow, in the wind serving
is our password.*



Summer heat may be vanishing. Autumn leaves are falling.
Wheels of time will be turning but LIONS sun will always shine.

MEMORIES OF PAST CHRISTMAS

Over the years our Club had been very active during Christmas time. For a number of years our Club used to sponsor a flatlet at the Ursuline Creche at Gwardamangia, hence at Christmas Lion members, often accompanied by their wives, used to visit the creche and give presents to the children. Besides toys the Club also gave essential items for the young children. Unfortunately when the creche was sponsored by one of the local banks this practice was discontinued.

At other Christmas times the Club also donated gifts to other institutions for orphans and/or needy children. This practice was discontinued when it was decided to collect food items to be distributed to those in need. However the needy children were not forgotten as food items were also given to them, including the young babies at the creche in Sliema. A few years ago the creche was given a small television set and a tape recorder which were donated by our twinned club Sciacca Host.

Unfortunately this year it was impossible to collect grocery items from schools, as most of the schools did their own distribution of goods given by students. Club members could neither collect grocery items at super markets due to the COVID restrictions.

One other Christmas event organised by the club was the first visit to Ta' Sawra Home at Rabat. The wives of Club members prepared Christmas sweets for the inmates together with other items purchased from confectioners. During the visit to the Home Lions and their wives used to mix with the inmates.

On such occasions each inmate was given a raffle ticket for a blanket. One Christmas when tickets were being given to the inmates there was a man who refused to take the ticket, When asked why he didn't want it, he replied "I do not want to die as yet". He explained that the previous Christmas the lady who won the blanket died after a week. The visits to the Home were unfortunately suspended during the pandemic but hopefully we will soon be able to revisit the home to meet the elderly therein.

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The musician played and played a whole Liszt of songs all through the night.

The thyme had arrived for us to eat. Before we knew it a whole slew of hot and cold starters were flowing in rapid succession amongst us – rou-lade, warm meatballs in a tomato sauce, finger-hot arancini, etc. Starters were pleasurably devoured.

Creamy dishes of salmon pasta and mushroom risotto interspersed between forkfuls by happy chatter, laughter and music followed. So far, the kitchen had made no fusilli mistakes (few silly mistakes)!

Traditional roasts took to the fore for mains accompanied by appropriate trimmings. Ah all that gravy and apple sauce! Puddings crowned a feast of delectable food. This certainly was a meal to remember testament to which were the licked clean plates returning into the kitchen accompanied by deafening clapping and cheering as a vote of thanks. Unanimous!

As the excitement drew to a crescendo the free raffle was drawn (won by Lion Susan Galea Borg and Lion Frederick Farrugia). Afterwards Lion Carmel Azzopardi (gold cutlery), Lion Albert Mamo (Mdina glass vase) and guest Ray Mercieca (litre bottle of malt whisky) were all winners. But really in the end we all won! Smiling happy faces wrapped in warm coats and furs voicing Christmas wishes said it all. A great big thank you to all those involved. This was a night to remember.



*Photo courtesy of
Lion Secretary
Lorna Farrugia
shows some of the
Lions and guests
at the Christmas
Party.*

MESSAGE FOM LION PRESIDENT

Dear Lions

I would like to ask you to reflect for a minute or two. Why we are at this meeting? What is the objective? When I joined the Lions just over 2 years ago, I took an oath, which I presume we have all taken. Let me read the oath also taken by the 5 new Lions who joined this month at our Charter Night:

"Since you have expressed a desire to affiliate with this club in accepting membership of Lions Club Sliema, you are encouraged to participate in the functions of the Club to the best of your ability and you will abide by the Lions code of Ethics and contribute your share to the programmes of the club."

We all made a solemn promise with witnesses regarding our future actions and behavior....."to participate in the functions of the Club to the best of your ability....and to contribute your share to the programmes of the club." There are 2 ways to do this. One is to organise functions/ happenings which we can't all do and it's the job of the President to designate those charged with this job, and the other is to participate in events both fund-raising and social. Now the heart of the club is beating, but very slowly. Maybe the weather has affected us, or holiday fever, maybe some of us are unwell, etc. Some members of the club, namely Margaret, Victor, Karl, Chris, Doreen and her committee, and myself, spent a great deal of time carefully planning 2 events recently: One was Bingo and Dinner – We were charging Euro30 -- Euro15 for the dinner and Euro15 for 2 games of bingo, Euro7.50 a game There were some very attractive and expensive prizes for a line and for a house – less than 20 tickets were sold. The other event was a Cultural Outing to the temples with a really good-value lunch at Karl's out of which no profit whatsoever was being made. It too had to be cancelled because of lack of support.

What is happening dear Lions? It's not just fund raising that's being rejected, it's also social events. Now both are so important for the club to be a club.

JOINED PROJECTS WITH TWINNED CLUB

Over the years our Club has twinned with several other Lions Clubs not only in the Mediterranean littoral but also in the United States and Africa. Our Club is twinned with Millbrae in California and with LC Sfax Thyna in Tunisia. The scope of twinning is not only to share views and report on club activities but also to sponsor projects.

A few years ago our Tunisian friends had asked whether we could provide an Encyclopedia Britannica to the Sfax Higher Secondary School. Our club agreed to donate this but the problem was how to deliver the volumes to Sfax. The problem was solved when a private pilot agreed to take the books to Sfax. For some years the Club also sent used eye glasses to Zimbabwe courtesy of Balkan Airlines which used to make a stop at Luqa Airport on their weekly flight to Harare. Several hundred spectacles were sent to our twinned club. Unfortunately this could not be continued as the authorities at Harare were demanding that we pay customs duty.

A few years back our Club and Sciacca Host made a reciprocal project. The Sicilian club donated a television set and a tape recorder to the Children's Creche at Sliema. Our Club reciprocated by sponsoring a small statue of the Virgin Mary at the entrance of the port of Sciacca with a small plaque stating that it was sponsored by our Club.

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I would like to think our fund-raising for a brand new car for Hospice Malta to help sick and dying children, parents, mothers and fathers who are going to pass away soon....don't you think we should do our utmost to help these people? Is it not essential that we continue to renew our bonds and links and appreciate and celebrate our differences as Lions to form a cohesive body with one noble aim to serve? Come on folks, let's give ourselves a shake and honour our oath to be worthy Lions and truly aim to serve. Are you prepared to do that?

NB: This was an address by Lion President during the first December meeting.